

PUNCH

Or
The London Charivari



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Charivaria

THEY are saying that whichever way Herr HITLER may move next he hopes Signor MUSSOLINI will stay away and give him a chance.

A South London boy can tie one of his little fingers in a knot. He really doesn't need to do this because he always remembers to carry his gas-mask.

At a Chicago baseball match Lord HALIFAX was offered a hot dog. British hospitality must not lag behind. If the American Ambassador attends the Cup Final, arrangements will be made to give him an orange.

GOERING was recently photographed in a white uniform with long-skirted tunic and holding a bouquet of flowers presented by an admirer. What's he supposed to be now? Queen of the May?



"Cricket umpires do a lot of travelling in a normal season," says a sporting writer. We have noticed that year after year these officials get round more.

A bowling-green near London was obliterated in a recent air-raid. German intelligence has been misinformed: DRAKE is no longer our Admiral.



A writer thinks that wives should do a certain amount of the work on allotments. This is a sly dig at those selfish husbands who want to do it all.

The Cup Final replay has been postponed and will now be played on May 31st. In Berlin it is held that there has been a deliberate attempt to make the fixture clash with the invasion.

According to a Vichy message, Herr HITLER, Signor MUSSOLINI and M. STALIN may meet shortly. Presumably to decide to whom they shall give the world.

An Italian paper says that HITLER is a clever writer of light verse. We, in common with the Navy, Army, R.A.F. and Home Guard, will unhesitatingly reject anything he sends us.

"South is playing a contract in No Trumps. East has to lead and can see in dummy: S.—K.J.10; H.—Q.9.7; D.—J.7.6. Which card should East lead, holding S.—A.Q.5.4. H.—9.7. D.—K.4.2?"—*Newspaper Bridge Problem.*

East should lead the 9 of Hearts. The Declarer should then play the 9 of Hearts from dummy and say "Snap."

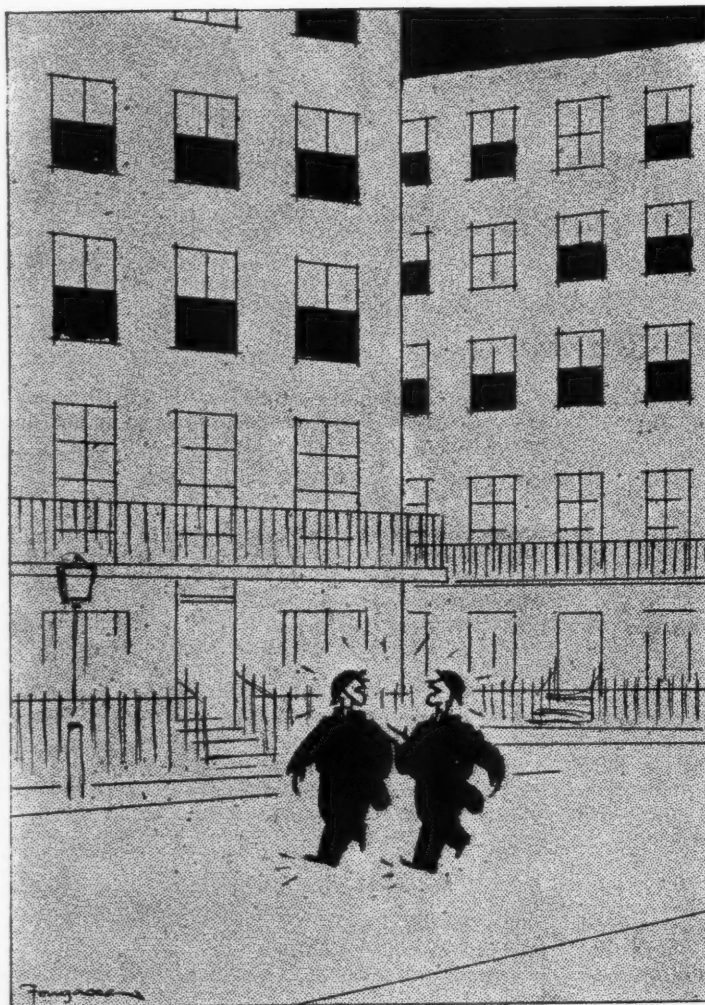
"If the Nazi leaders were cured what would be the result?" asks a writer. Bacon.



Cautious Announcement

"There seem to be no limits in the self-abasement and perfidy of which the men of Paris and Vichy—with the sole exception of Marshal Pétain himself—are incapable."—*Weekly Paper.*

Many men in the U.S.S.R. grow moustaches like STALIN's. So that is why Russian cigarettes are so sensibly equipped with long cardboard mouthpieces!



"I said it's funny to think that we are the only people round here that aren't sound asleep!!!"

The Wishing-Well

IT was Corporal Sugden who started the scheme. When he mentioned it to the rest of us in the hut his statement was received with a good deal of incredulity, for we had not hitherto noticed that the natives of Iceland were in the habit of throwing what is, to them, good money away. We may regard their kronur and their anrar as a kind of music-hall currency, but probably to them these are as real as the shillings and pennies we one day hope to see again. But Corporal

Sugden, if slow, is reliable, and there was a general feeling that Private (Ginger) Barnes should take the matter up with his girl-friend, the daughter of the local innkeeper.

Which he did. And when he had recovered, by means of a virtually compulsory levy, the whole of his outlay on alcohol (the total of which occasioned some harsh comment), he told us the story. It was a sacred wishing-pool. To those who threw in their kronur the gods would grant

their dearest wish. The Icelanders had been doing it for centuries. In short, a well-known racket in mediaeval circles.

At which Private Lumby, who in civilian life is confidential clerk to a solicitor, voiced what lay at the back of all our minds. After all, he said, once the coin is in the wish is granted and the coin is really wasted—if it is left to lie at the bottom of the pool. It's like an automatic machine, he went on, warming up to his subject. When you've got your packet of fags you don't expect no one not to take the money out, do you? No one contradicted him. It was clear that if this sort of thing had been going on for some centuries we were practically on to a treasure trove. So no one was surprised to see Corporal Sugden getting up at dawn the next morning, although he expressed his disappointment that everyone was awake to watch him. We explained that we were not suspicious. We only wanted to help.

And, indeed, the situation on reconnaissance was one which was no single-handed job. The wishing-pool lay in the bed of a small river which runs along a volcanic fault, and as far as we could see it was very, very deep. But we felt that, deep though it might be, we should be able to get down to the bottom somehow.

The easiest solution seemed to be to let down some implement to dredge the bottom. Private Anderson offered his mess-tin—at least, he said in the end that he felt it would be more pleasant for him if we did have his, so, when we had secured a reasonable quantity of "whipcord natural" from the stores, we converted it into a dredge. It was not easy. The mess-tin was very light and, although we did knock out one side, it still would not work. But we established that the depth was thirty-five feet and, as we told Private Anderson, if he gave up eating soup his mess-tin was as good as ever it was.

Next we tried an empty petrol-tin, and that provided a real fillip, for before it broke away from its cord we had recovered three kronur and eighty-five anrar, all in small coins. Private Lumby said, as the can sank back gurgling into the water, that we were at least entitled to an extra wish since it was bound to have held some more coins which were as good as ours already.

After the petrol-tin failed, the next line of attack was not too clear. Corporal Sugden suggested that we lowered Private Anderson to the bottom and that he held his breath

and collected as many coins as he could each time. He said he had seen it done on the pictures by Japanese pearl-fishers; but Private Anderson pointed out that he was not a Japanese nor accustomed to pearl-fishing, and that in any case the waters of Iceland are much colder than those in the Far East. Private Lumby suggested that Anderson wore his respirator under water, but we all had to admit that the respirator was only a protection against poison-gases and did not provide any substitute for air.

Then Private (Ginger) Barnes suggested we might get the Sappers to blast a channel so that the pool could drain itself naturally. We all liked this idea except Corporal Sugden, who said that it would be very difficult to explain it all away afterwards, and that we did not want to let the Sappers in on this anyway, did we? That was a shrewd and convincing argument.

We ran through all the other items of military equipment which could be turned to the task. Hand-grenades? No, we were not fishing. Could not the three-inch mortar be brought in somewhere? Or the Bren-carrier? There was a general feeling that there was little the Bren-carrier could not do, but Lance-Corporal Jackson, who has a brother in the carrier platoon, insisted that the carrier engine too wanted air to run on. So that was another blind alley.

Finally Anderson had the brainwave. If, he said, we dammed up the stream sufficiently we could empty the pool with our trailer-pump, clean it out and then let it fill again. This seemed the ideal solution. The full moon was due in four days, our platoon commander was celebrating a birthday in two days' time and, in short, the whole thing was ready to be laid on. We were, we felt, virtually millionaires (Icelandic type, anyway).

There the matter rests for the moment. We might have known that Iceland would look after its own. First it froze, which not only put at least a foot of ice on the pool but also caused our platoon commander to remove the trailer-pump in case it froze too. Next it thawed and washed away our dam. Then we had a hurricane which blew the trailer-pump into a drainage-dyke, where it still is. And finally we were relieved.

We did not tell the incoming platoon anything about this. When the war is over Private Lumby is going to float a small company called "Iceland Enterprises Ltd." and we are going into this on a business basis. After all it is nice to have something to look forward to.

Lost Property

I ASKED Dorothy where she had found it—in the front or the back. She said in the front, by the hand-brake. "One of the links is bust," she pointed out.

This had not escaped me. Pursuing my inquiries, I asked how many Lifts For Service Men she had dispensed during the afternoon.

"Only three." (It was clear that she considered this poor.) "A sergeant, a lance-corporal and an R.A.F. man. They'll be wondering where on earth it is."

"One of them will, at any rate."

"That's just it. If only I knew which, I could send it back."

"Pardon me," I said, "but how? Do you keep a passenger list?"

"Oh, dear," sighed Dorothy, "I never thought of that." Then she brightened. "The lance-corporal was called Ted."

As husbands go, I am an easy-going husband. But you know what soldiers are. "Did you ask him his name," I said coolly, "or was he just a fast worker?"

"Silly!" said Dorothy. "The sergeant called him Ted; they were together."

"Ah! I beg your pardon!"

"Granted as soon as asked."

"But surely," I said, putting

personal considerations aside, "this gives us a clue, does it not? Which of them sat in the front seat, the sergeant or the lance-corporal?"

"Ted did."

"The lance-corporal did. Then obviously he is——"

"But so did the R.A.F. man, later on."

"Oh. Damn."

"So it's hopeless, you see. I don't know *which* one to send it back to."

"Doubly hopeless," I said, "because if you did you wouldn't know where to send it. I pointed that out before, remember?"

"And yet . . ."

"And yet—what? Don't suck all the varnish off your finger-nail, you may never get any more."

"Nothing. I was thinking there was a way, but now I come to think there doesn't seem to be."

"In that case," I said, "it must join the *Marie Céleste* under the heading of Unsolved Mysteries. I'll go and chuck it in the dust-bin, shall I?"

"Yes," said Dorothy, "chuck it there."

So I did. After all, the identity-disc of a complete stranger wasn't any good to either of us. Dorothy did have another idea later in the evening, but I turned it down. I wasn't going to walk half a mile to put a fiddling little scrap of metal like that on the salvage dump.



"Look what the Billeting Officer has brought us!"

Pétain et Cie

(They apologize)

THE ships remain . . . The cities stand,
And here are wine and wheat.
Was it not well, to save the land,
We kissed the conqueror's feet?

And there shall be some Fashion Styles
And still some modish gowns
To please the Great One when he smiles
And soothe him when he frowns.

The mills, the factories shall run,
The simpler fools are those
Who strive to meet the invading Hun
And answer blows with blows.

When all their towns are wrecked by flame,
Their harbours blown to dust,
We shall have profit and have fame
Through him, whose will we trust.

We could not fight against our fate,
The easiest way was best—
The well-oiled lock that leaves the gate
Wide open to our guest.

We shall not be the first who sold
Nor he the first to buy
The honour of brave men for gold
And barter lie for lie.

Remembrance is a sick man's pain,
And graves no more than grass;
Our little life was meant for gain,
Not glory. Let them pass. EVOE.

Stanley Tack and Amy Beaker

THERE was once a machine gun tester outer named Stanley Tack who was also what is known as rather shy because all his friends said he was reserved long before Mr. Bevin said so.

He wasn't married but he had trouble with his teeth which only proves that if it isn't one thing it is another.

Now although Stanley was usually a cheerful sort of fellow he couldn't help thinking about marriage sometimes and one evening he said to his father Hey Dad what is the best age for a chap to get married? so his father said when he is old enough to know better. Stanley said Do you mean that never is too soon? so his father said Well yes but unfortunately no man is ever old enough to know better until it is too late. Stanley said But that doesn't make sense so his father said What were we talking about? and Stanley said Marriage so his father said Well then.

So Stanley said Well Dad I see what you mean but all the same what about the human race? so his father

said I suppose women will go on winning it as they always have ah well I am going to bed now and then he went to it.

Well Stanley settled down in front of the fire to read I Was Nurse To A Boy Whose Aunt Knew A Man Who Lived Near A Friend Of Hitlers which was one of those books packed with inside information such as is known only by people who have access to newspapers when all of a sudden there was a rat tat at the front door so he went to it.

There was a girl standing there with a tin hat on and she said Good evening so Stanley said Oh is it I hadn't noticed. She said Anyway there is a chink of light bright enough to read a book by if you sit on the window sill so he said Well what shall I do? and she said Thirty days if the police notice it but perhaps I can put it right for you so he asked her to come in and she came in.

Well while she was sticking some drawing pins in some curtains Stanley had a look at her and she had a very nicely put on complexion and as you probably know almost every bachelor likes a girl with a nicely decorated face because it makes her the centre of attraction although strangely enough almost every husband hates his wife to have a nicely decorated face because it makes people stare at her. Stanley could tell by the way she pushed the drawing pins in that she was very fit too so he said Well it has been a rainy sort of day hasn't it? and she said Yes it has. He said It was rainy yesterday too wasn't it? and she said Yes it was. He said Well I always say it never rains but it pours so she said Strangely enough my grandmother used to say that too so he said On your father's side or your mother's? so she said Oh we didn't take sides about it we just agreed with her. Then she went.

Well when she had gone Stanley went to bed but he couldn't sleep so he switched the wireless on but even listening to a variety programme didn't make him drowsy and he suddenly realized that his brain was very busy thinking thoughts about the girl with the tin hat on.

Now of course when thinking about a girl prevents a man from falling asleep it is a sure sign that he is wondering one of two things. He is either wondering why he hasn't married her or why he has. So in the morning when Stanley's mother brought him a cup of tea he said Have you ever been in love? instead of Kewmum as he usually did. His mother said Yes once but then I met your father and he proposed to me now drink your tea while it is hot.

So Stanley said Well I think I am in love and his mother said Well you are a one and no mistake so he said Well I hope there is no mistake but how can I make sure?

His mother said Has she got a face like a smudged passport photograph? He said No. She said Is she sort of podgy? He said Oh no. She said When she talks does it sound like an argument in a sawmill? so he said Good gracious no I am talking about a girl who called last night about the blackout while you were in bed so his mother said So am I but I wasn't in bed I was listening on the landing I do wish you would learn to speak the truth. She said Anyway you're in love all right.

Well talking to his mother made Stanley late so he had to shave in a hurry and that made him cut his face and he had to dress in a hurry and that made him crumple his collar and he had to eat his breakfast in a hurry and that gave him a pained expression so that when he hurried off to catch a bus he really looked as if he were married already.

Of course it is rather a handicap when a man doesn't even know the name of the girl he is madly in love with so Stanley tried very hard to think of a way to see the girl with the tin hat on again in spite of his father's warning about such things and anyway if you travel by



RESTORATION

"That, Sir, was the Italian Empire."



"By the way, did you remember to feed the canary?"

underground you must have noticed how many people seem to enjoy scampering down corridors marked No Entry.

So that evening when his mother and father had gone to bed Stanley put on a clean collar and brushed his hair and then he deliberately let a chink of light show through the window. Then he sat down and waited hopefully.

Well before long there was a rat tat at the door and it was the girl with the tin hat on so Stanley said Oh hullo so she said Oh hullo too. She said Your blackout isnt good it is brilliant so he said Oh and she said Ah you may well say Oh. So Stanley mustered all his courage and said Perhaps you will be good enough to see to it for me and she was and she did.

He said Well er thank you Miss Er so she said Well I know to er is human but my real name is Amy Beaker so he said My name is Stanley Tack and I think you are wonderful. She said What a sensible sort of fellow you are to be sure so he said What would you say to a cup of tea? so she said Well there isnt much one can say is there so I would rather talk to you so he said Do sit down so she did.

Well one thing led to another as it often does and before long Stanley was telling Amy all about himself and he told her how he was only seventeen when he took his matric.

She said Did you pass? so he said Will you have a cigarette? Then she told him all about herself and he believed every word of it because well you know what love is.

So after that they saw each other quite often and Amy started calling Stanley My sweet and then she started talking about Our suite and in next to no time they had entered into married so called life.

And on their first evening in their new home Amy said Just think if it hadnt been for your blackout we would never have met so Stanley looked very guilty which of course came easily to him now that he was a married man and he said Well I am afraid I rather deceived you because well the second time you called I well I left a chink of light on purpose. Amy said Oh did you! and he said Yes I did so she said Well thats a nice sort of thing to own up to I must say. He said Will you forgive me? so Amy thought it over for a bit and she said Well I suppose I shall have to because you see my angel the first time I called there wasnt even any chink of light at all.

But Stanley and Amy get on quite well together although of course marriage has changed Stanley quite a lot. But it hasnt changed his shyness. In fact if you get him alone he will probably tell you that he is twice shy.

Little Talks

PERHAPS he did it for a bet. Hess wouldn't bet. He has high principles.

What I can't make out is, why did the Huns say anything about it?

They had to give some explanation. In fact they had to give about six.

No, but I mean, in the first place. It was they who broke the news, not we—you remember, that stuff about Hess having a "progressive disease," and how he'd gone up in an aeroplane, against orders, and probably crashed. It was that, after all, that first upset the Huns, not anything that we said. Now, suppose they'd said nothing at all?

What then?

Well, they keep quiet, on the wireless I mean. But they let it get about, in Germany, that Hess is seriously ill—galloping consumption, or something. Or perhaps he fell on his back in the black-out, as I did the other day. Naturally they wouldn't publish it abroad that their No. 3 was in a bad way.

Well?

Well, in due course we announce (if we do) that we have Hess a prisoner in our hands.

And the Huns laugh heartily?

Of course. Anything we said would have been "clumsy British lies."

Or "criminal British propaganda."

Quite. And that's how such an unlikely story would have sounded. In fact it would have been so difficult for us to get our story over (if we'd started it) that I don't suppose we should have said anything about it.

Half a minute. Where are we?

I mean—the Huns lose Hess, but keep quiet about it. We've got Hess but keep quiet about it.

So Hess gets no publicity at all?

Yes.

Ingenious. But then the world would have missed the jolliest week of the war.

True. But we should have kept the Hun guessing for the duration.

On the other hand, they wouldn't have lost so much face throughout the Universe.

No. I think they were asses to say anything.

It wasn't one of Joe Goebbels' best weeks, was it? You may talk about our own dear old Ministry of Inf. But it looks like Machiavelli beside poor Joe just now. Did you ever hear so many contradictory accounts of one event from the same horse's mouth?

I counted nine.

The one I liked best was when they

hoped we'd be sporting enough not to give Hess any drug that might make him give away secrets.

Especially as they added that he didn't know any secrets.

A compliment, anyhow, that the only thing they were afraid of our using was drugs.

Do you think we shall make Hess broadcast?

A sort of Lord Hess-Hess? No. He wouldn't be funny enough.

And his fan-mail would be a nuisance. Poker tells me that the number of anonymous letter-writers still in our midst is simply shocking.

But nobody reads them? Or do they?

No. But the point is, the waste of paper, not to mention man-power.

And the British character.

Love of fair-play and so on? Yes. The funny thing is, Poker says, that nearly all anonymous letters to public men contain an accusation of cowardice of one kind or another, if it's only "refusing to face up to the facts." And the anonymous boys really seem to think they're being very brave.

It's astonishing that anyone should have the time for such a vice just now—not to mention the price of stamps.

I've got the most insanitary cold.

Have you been inoculated?

For typhoid, yes. For diphtheria, tetanus, typhus fever, small-pox, gangrene, and one or two Eastern diseases. But not for the British cold.

Extraordinary. Have a vitamin C tablet.

Thanks. What do I do—suck it?

No. Swallow it.

Why do you carry vitamin C about with you?

It's always been one of my favourite vitamins. And, now there are no oranges,

I take one of these from time to time and imagine it's a large blood-orange.

Jolly good show.

Talking of jolly good shows—what about Abyssinia?

Marvellous! Who says now that we're no good at the liberating act?

Only a beginning, of course. But what I think is so extraordinary is the number of places we keep on popping up in.

I beg your pardon?

The number of places we keep on popping up in.

Not very elegantly put, was it?

Perhaps not. But what I mean is this. Some people say "What on earth do you want such a large Army for?"

I know. They're also, as a rule, the people who say "Why don't you occupy Portugal, Morocco, Syria, Sicily, Tunis, Madeira, the Dodecanese, Lemnos, the Dardanelles, the Azores, and one or two other places?"

Quite. But, apart from them, look at the places we are popping up in—or clinging on to! Singapore—Suez—Crete—Cyprus—Palestine—Basra—Habbaniya—Addis Ababa. Most of Abyssinia, Eritrea, and several Somalilands—the parts of Libya about Cyrene—Sollum, Alexandria, Tobruk, Cairo—Khartum, Malta, Gibraltar, Hong Kong—Southend—Colombo—Iceland—

Hey! Stop! You're making me giddy!

Well, there you are. The boys are everywhere. We talk as if Hitler was everywhere. So he is, in a way—blast him! But when you come to count up the active fronts—I mean the places where things are happening, or may happen at any minute—well, Hitler, by all accounts is afraid of a war on two fronts—but we're hard at work on about fifteen.

With not enough chaps on any of them.

Maybe. But we're holding on to them still. And prodding the brute as well. That's the point. Why, compared with us, the dear old War Lord is a one-string fiddle.

He's looking after a good deal of Europe, you must remember, besides the Battle of the Day, whatever it is.

Quite. But we're also looking after a few trifling corners like India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Newfoundland, the West Indies, Ceylon—

Stop! I'm getting giddy again.

Well, do you see the point?

I think I do. Cheer-oh, Britannia!
A. P. H.



At the Pictures

ENTERTAINMENT WEEK

NOT often does the romantic comedy get brilliant and imaginative direction; it seems usually to be assumed that the well-known and competent stars supply the romance by their mere presence and that all the necessary comedy emerges automatically from the plot situations. Thus *The Lady Eve* (Director: PRESTON STURGES) is all the more of a delight, for almost every moment of it is so made as to stimulate, interest or amuse. HENRY FONDA appears as an ale millionaire's son who, scorning the parental brewery (no doubt wisely, for seldom can there have been a man more accident-prone), has become an ophiologist. On the way back from a snake-hunting expedition up the Amazon he falls in love with a girl (BARBARA STANWYCK) whom he hastily leaves when she proves to be one of a trio of card-sharpers. They meet again later, "in the heart of the contract bridge country," at the house of the young man's father; this time, out for revenge, she is posing as her English cousin, the *Lady Eve Sidwich* (who, by the way, has only half an English accent, but successfully deceives because that half includes the broad *a* and the pronouncing of the second *c* in Connecticut), and he falls in love with her again. They marry; her revenge is complete when she drives him out of the honeymoon train in the middle of the night by a recital of a staggeringly long list of (imaginary) earlier lovers. The happy ending comes with surprising speed after that . . .

I found this an intensely enjoyable picture, even apart from the frequent excuses for laughter. It is full of those touches of intelligence and that care for detail which (let some of our British "what's-the-use-of-bothering" directors say what they may) make a film more entertaining for everybody

besides adding distinction for people who think distinction counts. Never before have I noticed background-music (and the absence of it) used with such skill; and indeed the use of sound throughout is exceptionally pleasing.



[The Lady Eve]

MEN OF WITS

"Handsome Harry" Harrington CHARLES COBURN
Gerald MELVILLE COOPER
"Sir Alfred McGlennan Keith" ERIC BLORE

(One small point: the constant momentary recurrence of that irrelevant burst of children's voices as a particular door is opened and shut.)



J.H.D.

[Boom Town]

INSEPARABLES

Square John Sand. SPENCER TRACY
Big John McMasters CLARK GABLE

The playing is first-rate too; there is brilliant fun from, among others, the baleful WILLIAM DEMAREST and the exasperated EUGENE PALLETTE . . . You may gather that, like everybody else, I recommend this film.

Boom Town (Director: JACK CONWAY) of course is a "natural." (Even the trailer for this went so far as to say "Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer EXCITEDLY present . . .") CLARK GABLE, CLAUDETTE COLBERT, SPENCER TRACY, HEDY LAMARR; comedy, violence, passion, quick money and spectacle—what could impede the roaringly successful progress of a work so fortunate in its ingredients? No remarks about it can have any effect—unless perhaps on those odd people who adopt some arbitrary criterion, and "never" (or "always") go to a picture about oil, or about America, or about rags-to-riches or vice versa, or photographed in sepia, or not photographed in sepia, or with a child in it, or what not. This is a story about wildcat (chance, speculative, free-lance) oil-drilling, and the friendship and rivalry of two men, *Big John McMasters* (CLARK GABLE) and *Square John Sand* (SPENCER TRACY). They both love *Betsy* (Miss COLBERT); *Big John*

marries her, and *Square John*—we get this impression—spends the rest of his life thinking out more or less subtle tricks to keep *Big John* and his wife together. He judges the drastic step of ruining him financially to be necessary in the end, to stop him from being tempted away by *Karen* (Miss LAMARR). Meanwhile we have had spectacular "strikes" and burnings of oil, fights and occasions of more comic violence in and out of the "boom town," scenes of love, luxury, poverty, heavy drama and fun. It is all exceedingly efficient entertainment and, as I say, it can't miss.

(But of these two films the one I shall make an effort to see again is *The Lady Eve*.)

At the time of writing HENRY FONDA is also on view as a country boy who runs away to join a circus in the eighteen-forties. *Chad Hanna* (Director: HENRY KING) is in Technicolor with many pleasant effects, and a leisured quality that comes, presumably, from the original novel. R. M.



The House

ALANE at the end of Old Pilgrim Street
Leads on to a sheep-track over the moor,
And you come at length to where two
streams meet,
The brook called Liss and the shallow Stour.

Their waters kiss, and they sing all day—
Rushes and kingcups, rock and stone;
And hunched in the valley, forlorn and grey,
Is a house whence even the birds have flown.

Its ramshackle gate swings open, but
No sickle covets its seeding grass;
There's cobbled path to a door close-shut;
But no face shows at the window-glass.

No smoke wreathes up in the empty air
From the chimney over its weed-green thatch;
Briar and bryony ramble there;
And no thumb tirls at the broken latch.

Even the warbling water seems
To make lone music for none to hear;
Else is a quiet found only in dreams,
And in dreams this foreboding, though not
of fear.

Yes, often at dusk-fall when nearing home—
The hour of the crescent and evening star—
Again to the bridge and the streams I come,
Where the sedge and the rushes and kingcups
are:

And I stand, and listen, and sigh—in vain;
Since only of Fancy's the face I see;
Yet its eyes in the twilight on mine remain,
And it seems to be craving for company.

W. DE LA M.



"Personally, if I hadn't lost my gas-mask I'd make a special point of always carrying it about with me."

Oh, To Be In Britain . . . !

(To Lucasta, who can command me anything, except to tell her "where does the poem come from that starts 'Merrily, merrily, Cape St. Vincent' ? . . .")

MMERRILY, merrily Cape St. Vincent,
to the North West dies away;
Verily, verily Robert Browning
would have had a word to say
Had he found his famous poem
gone dactylic, girlish, gay.

Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came
with a hey nonny nonny !
And Bishop Blougram's not to blame
with a hey hey hey ;
Apology nothing ! Shake yo' feet !
There goes Pippa ! Ain't she sweet !
It's barretty in Wimpole Street
with a hey nonny hey hey hey !

Merrily, merrily, Men and Women,
watch us swing the Epilogue !
Give the works to Paracelsus,
from Sordello blow the fog !
Making even Flush the spaniel
know the meaning of Hot Dog !

As Dirk, who got those shimmy-shakes
with a hey nonny nonny !

Bringing dat ole good news from Aix,
with a hey hey hey !
Remarked a-gallop "Who cares whether
This is our Last Ride Together ;
Let's just take it hell-for-leather
with a hey nonny hey hey hey !"

(and so on . . .)

Singing

I DON'T know if anyone has ever tried to explain the extraordinary prejudices which well up in people's minds when they think about singing. One explanation, and I must say a pretty slipshod one, is that everyone is always prejudiced about everything; another, not much better but it will have to do, is that when people think of singing they think, naturally, of other people singing, and this leads them to think of other people having baths. It is well known that no one *likes* to think that other people are having baths, not even people who have just had baths or are just going to have them; and this subconscious annoyance gets pushed sideways to include the singing.

I ought to say a few words about this belief, handed down through the ages, that everyone having a bath sings. Because it isn't quite accurate. Singing in a bath is supposed to have something to do with a bathroom making people's voices sound better than they are, that is, louder; but this, I think, is more likely to *stop* people singing, because they argue that other people will be able to hear them as clearly as they can themselves, but with less sympathy; and I think, if you listen, you will agree that most people sing only when the taps are running, or the cistern filling up, or when they are splashing. I know that it comes to more or less the same thing, but it puts it all in a truer light.

Now for what is perhaps the next best known kind of singing; that is, what is usually called singing about the house. (I don't mean *about* it, of course, but *about* it.) Why do people sing about the house? Well, it may be that they have just been rung up by someone they were hoping to be rung up by, when they find themselves singing better than they had expected. It may be that they have quarrelled with someone else in the house and want to show that they are in the right, when they sing louder than they really want to. It may just be that the sun is shining, when they sing louder than other people really want them to. Or it may only be that they have a tune in their heads and can't make the middle part join on to the end, when they hum it very quietly, and with little confidence, and make up for it by going on to something they are surer of. Of course there *are* people who sing or hum about the house the whole time; I think you can define these people as missed when they aren't there, but not otherwise.

This brings me to *joining in*, which is a branch of singing that has come on a lot lately. Indeed, before the wireless and the gramophone were invented people can have done little joining in because there was nothing to join in *with* except other people's singing. Now anyone who has ever, however long ago, been to a cinema at ten in the morning will agree that it is very difficult for most people to join in with other people singing, but surprisingly easy for some. This is probably why, in the days before gramophones, wireless sets, cinemas, football-matches and so on were invented, the sort of people who do find it easy were segregated and allowed to sing in clumps round a piano, or even separately, while ordinary people did nothing. But



"Hello, is that the police? I've just established contact with an advance element of an enemy parachute unit."

nowadays times have changed. When a wireless set is singing a dance tune, it is extremely difficult for nearly everyone *not* to join in; or, rather, nearly everyone will want to join in, but one person will get there first, and then this prejudice that I was telling you about will probably spring up in the minds of the others, and they may find themselves suddenly sweeping up the grate with a little brush with hardly any bristles, or folding back their newspaper, or even getting up and switching the wireless off.

Strangely, people don't mind other people singing to a gramophone; perhaps because they think it would look silly to switch a gramophone off in the middle of a record; perhaps because it is difficult to do this without scratching the record, and gramophone records are always someone else's; and perhaps because they know the gramophone will switch itself off quite soon, anyway.

To go back to the wireless; sometimes of course you will hear it singing not a dance tune but a *song*; that is, much louder and with each note separate. I think it is safe to say that no one wants to join in with this kind of singing. The feeling at the back of people's minds is that someone must want to hear it or the wireless wouldn't be on; and most people's upbringing has fixed it in their heads that what other people want is more important than what *they* want. Sometimes, it is true, this kind of singing happens just before the news, when there is a rule that anything heard on the wireless is not meant to be listened to, except so as to know when it stops. And before I leave the wireless, I must say that sometimes, no one knows how, but usually in other people's houses, people suddenly realize they are having

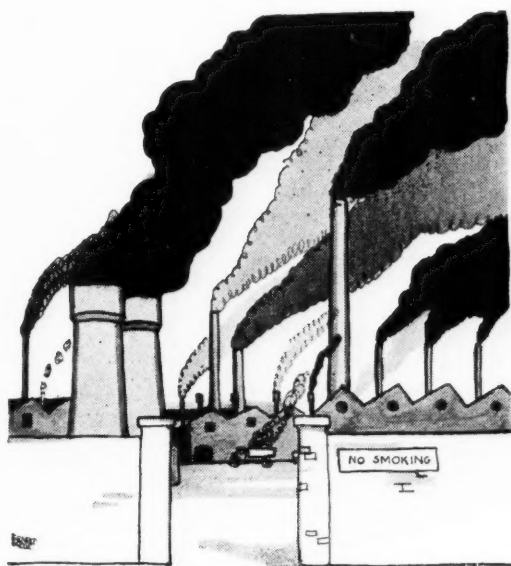
breakfast and listening to five voices singing about the spring, all at once, and the top voice very high and the bottom voice very low and the whole thing louder than five people could sing. This is such an extraordinary thing to be supposed to want to hear at breakfast-time that most people never get further than thinking how extraordinary it is; though some develop it a bit and feel half sorry that five people should have to do anything so artistic so early in the day; watering it down with a suspicion that they are a gramophone.

Now to go back to the singing that we do ourselves. It has been worked out that people sing when going downhill on a bicycle, but not up. People mending things sing or whistle, stopping while they hammer and carrying on where they leave off. People walking past barrel-organs sing while they are under cover of the noise, and keep it up inside their heads for a bit afterwards. People coming out of a cinema and thinking of a tune in the film they have seen are always terribly surprised if someone they saw coming out of the cinema too is actually singing the same tune; if it is in the key they are thinking of, that is, the key it was played in in the film, they feel almost psychic. If people hear a tune on the wireless in the evening, and next morning hear an errand-boy singing it or whistling it, they feel even more so. I don't think I need say anything else about errand-boys, except that they pedal standing up, with their knees bent outwards. I don't know that I need say anything else about singing, either; only I just want to mention one more class of singers—the people who hum on buses. All I want to say about them is that they must be interesting, as people, because they sound absent-minded enough to be geniuses; and yet, as people, they remain a mystery because no one has ever been able to identify them.

o o

Compensation

YOU can't get blood from a stone, I'm told,
Which drives mosquitoes mad,
But you *can* get platinum, gems, and gold . . .
Come, come, that's not so bad.





"Now HERE's something which ought to catch the foreman's eye."

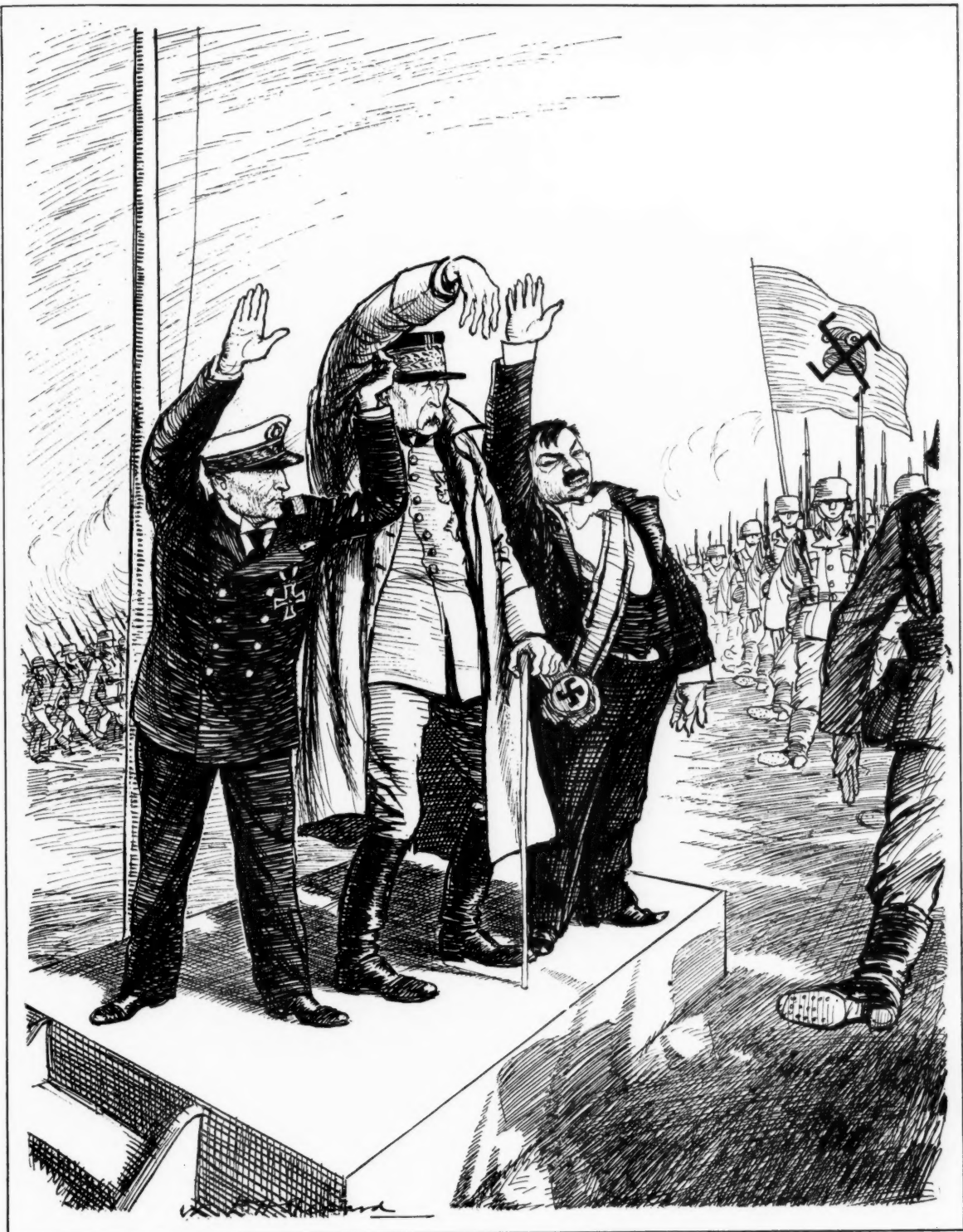
Prueue

WHAT prompted him he never knueue,
 Perhaps it was her well-shaped shueue,
 Her hat, set cheekily askueue,
 Her big round eyes of china blueue,
 That made him call out "How d'yueue dueue?"
 They lunched off beer and Woolton stueue
 And talked of Garbo, Brent, Menjueue,
 And others of the screen's Whueue's Whueue.
 Anon they visited the Zueue
 And gazed upon the kangarueue,
 The panda and the caribueue.
 He dined her at "The Witches' Brueue,"
 The bombers came, the sirens blueue,
 The guns began their hullabalueue—
 Who cares! with crab on the menueue.
 They drank to victory, they slueue
 The whole infernal Nazi crueue,
 Hanged Ribbentrop and Goering, thueue
 The Fuehrer to the Mothers Ueue.,
 And Himmmler into boiling glueue.
 And so the precious moments flueue

Until at last blacked out of viueue
 They stood and tried to say adieueue.
 They went all shy and ingenueue—
 He said: "Oh gosh, Miss Pettigrueue,
 I think I'm getting fond of yueue!"
 She said: "Oh, won't you call me Prueue?"
 And squeezed his hand and murmured—"Hueue!"
 He sensed a nightingale was dueue,
 It sang—in Shaftesb'ry Avenueue
 And all the way to Waterlueue
 Right on to Platform No. Tueue,
 Which beats that Berkeley parvenueue.
 To-day, before a friendly fueue,
 The church of St. Bartholomueue
 Pronounced its blessing—entre nueue
 I wrote these verses in my pueue.

* * * * *

The spelling is unusual, trueue;
 It seems he met her in a queue.



"THEY SHALL PASS."



“A THOUSAND THANKS”

“A THOUSAND thanks, the men and myself are most grateful to you. There are still bitter East winds blowing in the bleak places where the guns are, and the woollies are much appreciated.”

Letters of appreciation reach us from many directions, expressing the gratitude of the Fighting Forces, of the bombed and homeless, of the hospitals and many others who benefit by gifts from the PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND. These gifts are only made possible by your generosity and contributions. Please help us to help those on whose courage and unceasing efforts so much of our liberty depends.

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Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, May 20th.—House of Lords: Their Lordships Get a Surprise.

House of Commons: The Premier Tells of the Attack on Crete; Fire Services Bill, all stages.

Wednesday, May 21st.—House of Commons: Secret Session—this time on Supply.

Thursday, May 22nd.—House of Commons: Finance Bill, Second Reading.

Tuesday, May 20th.—The House of Commons was in one of its "moods" to-day. And so, for that matter, was the House of Lords—but of that more anon.

Question-time can be a demi-Paradise for Ministers. Or it can be a demi-Other Place. To-day was one of those snappy days, with incipient "scenes" over all sorts of queer and (normally) unconsidered trifles, and the mildest of men hurling themselves into rages.

Captain A. M. LYONS, for instance, normally a model of old-world courtesy, had a regular up-and-downer with (you



IN TRAINING

"Proposals for improving the distribution of eggs are in an advanced stage of preparation."—Major LLOYD GEORGE, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food.

will never guess!) even-gentler Major LLOYD GEORGE. It began with a question about profiteering in tinned marmalade, and the Captain ended

the row with the announcement that he would raise a debate later.

Then Sir JOHN WARDLAW-MILNE acidly pointed out to the Home Office that it was "very difficult for a man to answer a charge that had not been made." Which seemed reasonable enough, but it was the way he said it.

Miss ELEANOR RATHBONE, not to be outdone, complained about property-owners who made no arrangements for fire-watching their premises—"and are not there to see that they are executed." Dr. LITTLE, from Ireland, looked enviously at this poacher of bulls.

Mr. HAROLD MACMILLAN, of the Supply Ministry, averted another attempted blitz by assuring the House that the PRIME MINISTER (who sat, mask-faced, on the Treasury Bench) was "never wholly satisfied with Supply; his position is one of qualified optimism."

Captain DAVID MARGESSON, War Minister, scored the nearest approach to a success with an announcement that the uniform allowance for new officers is to be £35, instead of £30. But even this led to a demand from Mr. BELLENGER for its back-dating to the beginning of the war—or it might have been the beginning of the Army; it is hard to hear Mr. BELLENGER at the end of a sentence. The concession will date from January 1st last.

Mr. HAROLD NICOLSON, of the Ministry of Information, cheered the House up a little by expressing the view that publication of news of bombing of some famous buildings (to wit, the Houses of Parliament), and withholding it in other cases, was "not Government policy, but common-sense."

Major VYVYAN ADAMS, whose humour is of the corrosive type, chose as his victim not one of our own Ministers, but Herr RUDOLF HESS, Minister to none other than Der Fuehrer of Germany. This gentleman, now visiting Britain after an adventurous flight and parachute descent, the Major described as a "bloodstained crook," adding a word of condemnation of those who indulged in "nauseating rhapsodies" on Hess's personality.

Mr. CHURCHILL (with, it seemed, an envious glance at one who could employ such richness of imagery) replied that he would not do anything to detract from its flowery elegance, whereupon the Major threw in a complaint that *The Times* had called "this creature" an idealist.

Mr. GEORGE HICKS, of the Ministry of Works and Buildings, is a Trade Union leader who is not used to being answered back, and, challenged about

payments by an outside body to an official of his Department, got very involved on the subject of "principle." Payment to an official of £1 was as bad—or as good—as £10,000 if the



The HOME SECRETARY'S Bill authorizing the Nationalization of all Fire Brigades was carried through all its stages in one day.

principle were wrong, said he, and £10,000 was as good—or as bad—as £1 if the principle were right.

The House looked embarrassed by this out-of-order disquisition on ethics and morals, which reached its end just in time to save its author from rebuke by Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. CHURCHILL, as so often before, restored unity to the House by rising and, without a single note, giving a swift review of the war's recent developments.

We had captured Amba Alagi, in Abyssinia, with the Duke of AOSTA, the Italian Commander-in-Chief. This marked the end of organized resistance in the land of the Negus, already happily restored to his throne in Addis Ababa. Our campaign had been one of the most remarkable ever waged by British or Imperial troops, and was months ahead of schedule. The South African Army and, above all, the Indian Army, had played memorable parts in the battles, winning the honour and admiration of their British comrades.

Then he broke the news about the sudden air-borne attack by the Germans on Crete, seat of the Greek Government. We had continually bombed German concentrations of aircraft in Southern Greece, but this



"We have only one Professional Assassin on our books, Sir, but he failed in his last situation."

had not prevented the arrival of a good many in Crete. There would be stern resistance from the British, New Zealand and Greek Forces on the island, fighting under General FREYBERG, V.C.

Later in the day, Mr. CHURCHILL added that the battle was developing rapidly, and that the Germans had landed 1,500 troops in New Zealand battle-dress—an exposure that was greeted by cries of "Shame!" from all over the House.

Meanwhile, over in the Lords, quite a nice little bother was going on. Lord SIMON, sitting on the Woolsack, looked like an unwilling but benevolently sorrowful witness of a family scrap. He seemed to wear a permanent blush of embarrassment. Lord MOTTISTONE (still better known as JACK SEELY) started it. He had down a motion asking that the pay of soldier prisoners of war in the hands of the Axis Powers should be saved up for them, with 2½ per cent. interest, instead of being handed over, without interest, at the end of the war.

His Lordship has an admirable baritone voice and an even more admirable touch of rather ruthless

determination. He said he had been led to believe that the motion was an agreed one, only to find that Lord CROFT, representing the War Office, was "agin it." But a trifle like that was not going to deter the President of the National Savings Movement, and he intended to go on with it. So there!

With the flourish of a triumphant conjurer producing the wriggling and very live rabbit from a hat, Lord MOTTISTONE proceeded to tell their astonished Lordships that, by a rule made in pre-Napoleon days, officers who became prisoners of war were assumed to be innocent victims of Fate, while "other ranks" to whom this misfortune came were regarded as guilty men until they proved themselves innocent playthings of the same malignant Fate. The practical result was that officers got their pay, and could invest it at interest, while men got none until the war ended, and could not, therefore, earn interest on it.

Had Mr. MAXTON made his predicted ascent to the Gilded Chamber he would at that point have offered a suitable speech on the "class distinctions" involved, but Lord MOTTISTONE

addressed a House not uncomfortably crowded with "other ranks" in a voice that betrayed sorrow rather than anger. The anger—fine Victorian peppery stuff—came later.

Going quite red when Lord CROFT, most persuasive of putters-up-of-impossible-cases, made the promised rejection, Lord MOTTISTONE complained that it was (he swallowed hard) "besmirchment"—yes, that was what it was—of all below commissioned rank.

Lord CROFT, hastily mugging up the words of Casabianca, prepared to stand on the burning deck alone, but even he seemed astonished at the speed with which his splendid isolation was achieved. Noble Lord after Noble Lord got up and announced that he was for the raft along o' JACK SEELY. They upped and said nasty things about Lord CROFT, his advisers and anyone else who got in the way. Lord CROFT, abashed, and probably feeling more like Captain BLIGH, made a running leap for the raft, yelling a promise to ask the War Minister to look into the matter again.

Lord MOTTISTONE, having been War Minister, seemed to think this was not good enough, and turned his thumbs

ruthlessly downwards, demanding the "instant" dropping of the offending regulation. If not, he hissed, twirling an imaginary moustache and flinging a mythical cloak around his shoulder, Lord CROFT would find himself in the Division Lobby—alone.

This prospect shook even the iron determination of Lord CROFT, who protested that he could not do more than ask his chief to have another look at the problem.

Lord MOTTISTONE gave an angry running commentary on this short speech and threatened that, even if he withdrew the motion on this occasion, he would raise it again soon. And then . . . look out!

Lord CROFT, his belief that it would all come right in the end thus justified, bowed gratefully. Lord MOTTISTONE, still angry more than somewhat, did not return the bow. Tableau! as they say.

More luck came to Lord CROFT when he promised speedier letters and telegrams to and from our gallant fighters in the Middle East. There had been many complaints from Members of the House about the snail's pace at which those precious links with England, home and beauty were able to travel.

Tribute was paid to the memory of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, who died a few days earlier. His was the staff which rapped imperiously at the door of the House of Commons on formal occasions. That door is now, alas! no more. Black Rod died a few hours after the disaster.

Wednesday, May 21st.—M.P.s wore the important air they always assume when one of the frequent secret sessions is in immediate prospect. This time it was Supply that was to be debated behind locked and shuttered doors, and Members did not look at all pleased with Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS when (risking seven years' penal servitude) he blew the gaff by revealing that never, in a secret session, had a Minister said anything that could not have been bellowed from the house-tops. However, hope doubtless springs eternal in the legislative breast.

Mr. SORESENSEN suggested a mutual agreement with the enemy to end bombing, but Mr. ATTLEE, Lord Privy Seal, thought this impracticable.

Major LLOYD GEORGE mentioned that eggs are soon to be rationed and maintained that there was no need for queues. Not a few people queued without knowing why. One lady he knew queued for bird-seed, but had no bird. The Major implied that he would like, in theatrical parlance, to remedy that deficiency.

Mr. WILLIAM MABANE, Home

Security Parliamentary Secretary, advised against the purchase of impressively-named and expensive extinguishers for fire-bombs. They were not so good as that well-tried (and cheap) remedy sold under the well-known (and unpatented) title of H₂O.

Mr. CHURCHILL added a trifle to the history of the fight in Crete, saying that the situation was in hand, but that fighting would continue, and increase in severity.

Thursday, May 22nd.—Main business of the House of Commons was the Second Reading of the Finance Bill.

Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS and Sir RALPH GLYN asked that the Committee which is to examine the measure in detail should eliminate from it about fifty clauses "drafted in terms so obscure as to be unintelligible to His Majesty's subjects."

Most things to do with Income Tax look like that to your scribe.

o o

"In his youth he was born at Westerham in Kent."—*Australian Paper.*

Most of us make an earlier start.



"It's a complaint about the food, Sir—he says he found a file in his loaf."

"By Order"

ALOYSIUS O'GRADY, who has long catered for the employees of the people who feed at Cloney's one and only hotel, stood for a moment or so in his open doorway and looked along the crowded muddy street, and his heart failed him. "They'll come in here in their millions," he told himself, with the glib present-day mention of this once awe-inspiring number induced by repeated and casual references in the Press and over the air to hundreds and even thousands of it, "an' they'll rise a frightful murren about the new order, an' 'tis meself an' Mary that may bear all the blunt"; and Mr. O'Grady hurried back down the dim and narrow passage.

It was Fair Day in Cloney, and this does not mean that the day was fine—quite the reverse: "As wet as the Fair of Cloney" is a common saying in those parts. It simply means that the bi-yearly cattle fair took place there on that date; for thanks to its continued immunity from the horribly prevalent foot-and-mouth disease, Cloney is one of the comparatively few places in Southern Ireland where such a fair may still be held.

In the so-called dining room Mrs. O'Grady was retrieving a sorely-needed fork from its temporary task of plugging the loosely-fitting window-sashes. "I put it there meself," she told her husband, "to stop the rattle-rattle the day of the big wind, an' you may say I'm lookin' for it ever since." Reminded by this of her unfortunate gift for losing things by simply "layin' them out of her hand," Aloysius searched the table for the two cards prepared by him with infinite labour after a visit by the Sergeant of the Civic Guards. Face downward as they now were, instead of standing propped against the two huge salt-cellar, he did not see them until the comparative whiteness of the cardboard patches on the discoloured cloth attracted his notice, and he moved them back to their original places, ignoring the two big spots of iron-mould they had covered. Then, standing back, he read aloud the laboriously-printed warning dictated by the Sergeant. "IT IS ILLEGAL," both cards announced somewhat unevenly, "TO SERVE WHEATEN FOOD AT MORE THAN ONE COURSE."

BY ORDER.

"Right enough they'll be in a woeful turmoil when they see that," he warned his already uneasy wife, "but they can read it for themselves. Let you keep out of it the same as meself,

for 'tis no default of ours. All you need say," he went on hopefully, "is that if so be they have bread wid their bacon an' cabbage they can't have it wid the tay afther, for be all accounts there's wheaten flour in it, although you'd never accuse it of havin' anny reference to wheat at all." He grew still more optimistic concerning his wife's powers of persuasion. "Tell them," he said firmly, "that if they had to have grew a good dollup of winther wheat the way they was bid, instead of forever raisin' cattle for the fair of Cloney, we'd all have lashin's of bread—aye, an' have it as white as if we was in the war ourselves, an' not neuthral at all." And, hearing the sound of approaching voices, Aloysius went into the kitchen, leaving his wife to deal with his clients.

It was unfortunate for her that the first arrivals should have included the man known to his neighbours as the Scholar—because, as they say of him, "he does be able to insense you into the why of a thing." This man, as soon as he was seated, leaned forward and read aloud the pronouncement on the card nearest to him. "IT IS ILLEGAL," he read distinctly and derisively, "TO SERVE WHEATEN FOOD AT MORE THAN ONE COURSE. BE ORDHER." He repeated the last two words and his voice was bitter. "BE ORDHER!" he said, and glared at Mrs. O'Grady, who edged towards the kitchen door and slipped through, leaving it ajar.

"An' what," someone wanted to know, "is the exact significance of blether like that?" and the Scholar drew a deep breath. "I'll tell you what it signi-fies," he said grimly, and grasping the prongs of his fork he hammered loudly on the table with the stout handle. "Didn't I read it all in the paper?" he went on; "but I never thought to see Aloysius O'Grady follyin' such designs, whatsoever they might do in them big restyterants"; and he pounded the table still more viciously.

In the kitchen Mr. O'Grady paused in his task of cutting thick slices of fat bacon from what he spoke of as "the masterpiece." "Give him that," he said, pointing to a particularly well-stocked plate, "for he's all gab an' guts, like a young crow." He listened again and shook his head. "He's doin' a soort of a mili-tary ta-too," he said of a fresh outburst of hammering, "an' what will he be when he sees the consistency of the tay? Look'd, the

whole place will be in a tee-total uproar"—and his choice of an adjective was exactly right.

When Mrs. O'Grady got near enough to the demonstrator to put down the well-loaded plate the Scholar spoke tersely. "Bread," he said, and again, "Bread"; and she hurried back to the kitchen.

"He wants bread," she told her husband, "an' he has the appearance of makin' an extortion if he doesn't get it, although he never axed for it wid his bacon before. An' what's more, the Sergeant is in the passage outside, for I seen him." And the hammering began all over again.

"I'll have bread wid me mate an' bread wid me tay," the Scholar chanted loudly and aggressively. "I'm not axin' for wheaten food at all, I'm axin' for that ould neuthral bread, whatever is in it, an' it as yalla as a kite's claw"; and his voice rose higher and higher.

In the narrow passage the listening Sergeant remembered the dark contents of his wife's bread-crock, as seen that very morning, and a look of complete agreement crept over his face. Then, not wishing to be seen by the lunchers, he went out through the front door and round through the yard to the kitchen window, where he stood and peered in at the flustered Aloysius and at his still more flustered wife. Mrs. O'Grady yelped when she saw him, and dropped the loaf she carried, while the Scholar's voice went on and on, and his words were clearly audible even outside the window; "I'll have bread wid me mate," he shouted, "an' I'll have more bread wid the tay. 'BE ORDHER' no less nor," he said scornfully, "'BE ORDHER' be damned!"

The Sergeant beckoned to the horror-stricken proprietor and spoke clearly through a cracked pane of glass. "Well, I'm off now, Mr. O'Grady," he said meaningly, and turned away; and, surging through the back doorway, they saw him mount his bicycle in the street and disappear across the bridge.

With an exclamation of incredulous joy Mrs. O'Grady piled a plate with massive slices of bread cut from the stalest of the loaves and started towards the dining-room. "I thought I'd have to give that to the Buff Orphans," she told her husband, referring to her fowl, "but sure, the Scholar'll ate annything that has the name of bein' agen the law."

She was right; he finished the loaf.

D. M. L.

Times Aren't What They Were.

ONCE upon a time—and it was a time that has pretty well passed out of memory, as you'll realize directly—there was a rich merchant. That's how he started out, in the spacious days of good King Edward, and was always going to City dinners and bringing back boxes of preserved fruits to his three daughters.

(Fruits were things called apricots, greengages, cherries and so on, that used to be grown where the onion and the parsnip now spring freely. One ate them. They were hardly ever made into jam. *Preserving* was just covering these things very thickly with an old-fashioned substance, long since forgotten, called sugar.)

Presently the merchant was a merchant without being a rich merchant. Then he was a traveller in bicycles. Then he was a traveller in anything he could get, to anywhere he could get.

The daughters kept hens.

The merchant was a bit apt to call the two elder ones (the daughters, not the hens) Regan and Goneril, for reasons that were not wholly inadequate. The third daughter, however, didn't deserve to be called Cordelia (take this any way you like), so he called her Beauty, after a spaniel he'd once had.

One day the father made a sale of a patent device for detecting the presence of incendiary bombs under the bed, to a rather nervous man who was living alone in a house called Lauderdale Towers, or No. 374 Gladys Road East.

Surprised and delighted—for he'd long since given up any hope of ever planting a single one of these things on anybody, however blind, deaf or dumb—the salesman (*né* merchant) went gaily off down the steps, saw The Milk standing at the bottom of them, wishfully-thought that it looked as though it didn't belong to anybody much, and slipped the bottle into his pocket.

This anti-social behaviour was prompted by the psychological shock of having made a sale, and the salesman was more startled than distressed when his client, leaning out of the window, inquired whether he knew that some judges thought nothing of ten years for looting, and quite right too.

Something of an argument followed.



“‘Come to that,’ I sez, ‘’oo is Adolf S?’”

However, they settled it not unamicably, the client saying that if the father of three daughters couldn't provide a working housekeeper who could, and as that was the only thing that seemed to him to matter in the world—(the salesman said What about winning this war, but not out loud)—if he'd send one of them along, twenty-five bob a week and all found, they'd call it a deal.

The salesman accordingly caught the sixth of the buses that he tried to board and got home, and the first thing he saw was Beauty, and he told her that in times like these a girl couldn't pick and choose, and she'd better go to it, and the very next day she did.

Her reactions to her new employer

were a bit on the anti-side, because she wanted glamour and it seemed to her that he hadn't got any at all. But Lauderdale Towers was quite labour-saving and help for the rough provided and every other half-day off and a week-end once a week, so the brave girl decided to give it a trial.

And lo and behold! the next thing she knew, it turned out that what she'd thought was the face of her employer was in reality his *gas-mask*, worn for practice. When he took it off he looked—as she told him—somehow *different*, and nothing like so much of a beast.

This was the beginning of quite a thing, and eventually they got married and lived happily for about three minutes after.

E. M. D.



"That's what they've been and done—they've been and forgotten the entrance."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Unser Fritz

Frederick the Great (BELL, 15/-), who spoke French better than German, is an excellent subject for a French biographer, and M. PIERRE GAXOTTE has tackled the savage order of his life with a humanist's insight and compassion. "Broken in, not educated" by a father who publicly flogged the first well-bred girl the boy sighed for, FREDERICK tried to escape from Prussia but failed—and the friend who assisted him was beheaded before his eyes. On his accession the pupil of Madame DE ROCOULES and VOLTAIRE openly kept up the French culture of his youth while extending his brutal father's policy and using his brutal father's army in the first Prussian pursuit of *lebensraum*. Neither of these rôles is so attractive as that for which "UNSER FRITZ" used to be so affectionately remembered in Germany—the rôle of the peasant king who toured the countryside in his old berlin, telling his landowners to grow men, not pineapples and *pisangs* (bananas). "One man is more precious than all the pineapples in the world. He is the plant who should be cultivated." Before we reach Sans Souci, the snuff-boxes, the little dogs, and the ugly, unregretted death-bed, this is the FREDERICK to remember.

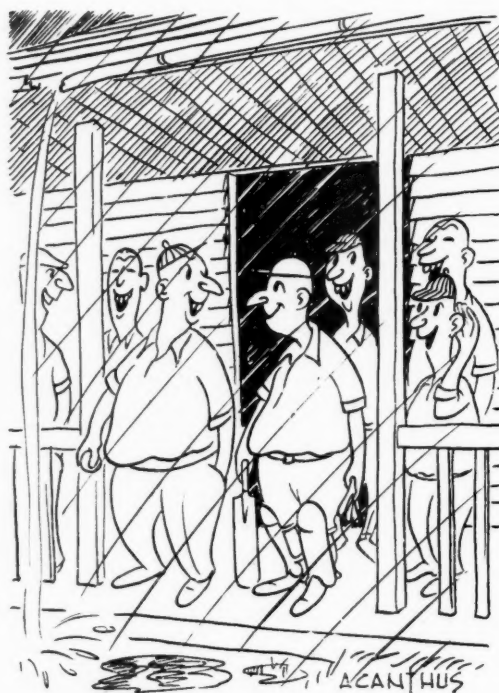
Towards an Anglo-European Understanding

With the (perhaps regrettable) passing of secret diplomacy, it remains for dictators and democratic governments to educate their people for the genuine understanding of foreign policy or for an automatic response to propaganda. With the former object in view, Mr. DOUGLAS JERROLD has

written a lucid, compact and extremely interesting book on this country's political relations with the Continent over forty crucial years. How long and how skilfully our statesmen averted and prepared for the last war, how disastrously their successors slid into the present one while stripping us of the material and strategic apparatus for waging it—these are the burning topics of *Britain and Europe, 1900–1940* (COLLINS, 7/6). Here we are told in realistic detail why the national blend of liberalism and Christianity is incomprehensible except to the vanished Centre Parties of Europe. If Mr. JERROLD does not realize with equal poignancy that Reds and Fascists are equally unacceptable to Anglo-Saxons—even in Spain, where he would have had us back the winner—it is perhaps because he fails to perceive that the effective liberalizing of Latin Christianity is just as desirable as the effective Christianizing of English liberalism.

Swallowing the Anchor

Versatility is among the sailor's proverbial characteristics, and Captain H. J. Moss, who records his own varied career afloat and ashore under the title *Windjammer to Westminster* (METHUEN, 10/6), provides a striking example of the rule. Starting as an apprentice in a Glasgow square-rigger whose identity he conceals under the name of *Painted Ports*, he changed successively from sail to steam, from blue to khaki, from the Army to business and, finally, from business to politics, becoming, after an apprenticeship served in local affairs, the first shipmaster to sit at St. Stephen's. His recollections include experiences in New Zealand, where he temporarily made a meal of the anchor for the first time as a runaway apprentice, in South America and the West Indies, in East Africa during the last war, and in several election contests leading up to his return to Parliament,



"There's the 'All Clear'! Shall we carry on?"



Sergeant. "ERE, WHAT ARE YOU FALLING OUT FOR?"

Excited Cockney. "SEE THAT PIGEON? I'LL SWEAR 'E'S GOT A MESSAGE ON 'IM!"

H. M. Brock, May 31st, 1916

where his impressions of Mr. CHURCHILL as the one man who dared to speak his mind while the war-clouds gathered over Europe are among his most interesting passages. "I love old *Painted Ports* and I love the Houses of Parliament," are his concluding words; and—like most old sailormen—he regards the hard training of his early days with gratitude as a preparation for the battle of life.

Poems of Goodwill

ALICE DUER MILLER's *The White Cliffs of Dover* (METHUEN, 2/6) was published three months ago in this country; its adaptation for the wireless will have introduced it to an even wider public. It is encouraging to take a look at the westward brightness, but in doing so you are apt to meet the frank disconcerting gaze of the west examining yourself. Mrs. MILLER's poem is one of the most generous tributes that Britain at war is likely to receive. It is the story of a young American

girl who marries an Englishman; he is killed in the Great War, and when war breaks out in 1939 she has to face the threat of losing her son also. She is willing to do this because in spite of the conceit, the frostiness, the ignorance, the blindness of the English, she still believes that their ideals are worth the sacrifice; insularity, in fact, implies narrow-mindedness, but also white cliffs and the foundation of just government. It is true that this simple and warmhearted story deals with only an infinitesimal part—the ballroom and caviare sandwich, country-house and footman, Hollywood-beloved part—of life in England, and it is true that the verse is not of a high order, but the feeling for history is, and the poem has plenty of that precious quality which used to be called "heart." You cannot read it without pleasure and deep gratitude.

"I am American bred,
I have seen much to hate here—much to forgive,
But in a world where England is finished and dead,
I do not wish to live."

Retractable Undercarriages, Di-Hedral, and the Eugenic Sparrow

THIS is a true story about a friend of mine who is a sparrow in a big way down at our local allotments. Actually he owns the Allotment Hut and occupies the south gable, letting out the north, west and east aspects to his numerous family. In his youth he had a hard struggle to make both ends meet, but he has prospered along with the rapid expansion of the allotment scheme and now has young vegetable shoots pretty well all the year round. He also owns the grazing rights over a magnificent crop of green-fly in the summer months, and for this alone he is looked up to by all the local sparrows. His voice is heard with great respect in council.

What I wanted to tell you about is his effort to improve the sparrow breed. This dates back to an accident which occurred to him a few years ago when he was trying to pull a ham-bone out of a dust-bin. During his struggles the lid was replaced and the bin was carried roughly to a cart into which he was tipped along with the rubbish. He received severe damage to the trailing-edge feathers of his starboard wing

and found it impossible to correct the consequent tendency to port, because he was unable to put on sufficient rudder. It was this which led him to study design. During the long period when he was grounded while awaiting the growth of new feathers he began to realize that if he had been, say, a magpie he would have had a long tail and would have been able to put on all the rudder a bird could wish for. He realized that he was built for short journeys at low altitude, and that his low landing-speed and rapid take-off were eminently suitable to a sparrow's calling, but he wished for more. He decided that he would try to produce a sparrow that was as fast as a Spitfire and which yet preserved all the niceness of a sparrow's nature, and to that end he set about choosing a wife with the most perfectly retractable undercarriage. After all, he reasoned, stream-lining is very important, and stream-lining begins with the undercarriage. So he kept a sharp look-out for a lady sparrow with the requisite feature.

I am glad to say that it was not long

before he found his mate, and you can imagine the excitement with which he awaited the day when the first brood took to the air. He was particularly pleased with his wife because, in addition to her beautiful landing-gear, she had a smaller turning-circle than any other sparrow in Middlesex, which is saying something, because they have to be good in Middlesex these days, competition being what it is in the air.

However, it seemed at first that he was to be disappointed in this family. Their under-carriages were good, but their turrets were set too far forward and they lacked balance. They all took prizes for quick get-away at local meetings, even when pitted against some of the fastest cats obtainable; but once in the air they were ungainly erratic flyers, and found it impossible to hold a steady course. The result was that they began to disappear one by one, usually following an argument about a collision with a larger bird. Finally there remained only Frederick, the eldest son, who hatched out at the back of the nest and whose turret had therefore been squashed further aft due to his cramped quarters. All my friend's hopes were now centred on Frederick. He had hoped to select mates for his children in such a way that several special features could be allied to the perfection of undercarriage already obtained, but as only one child remained he found it difficult to decide what he should look for in his son's bride.

He took to climbing up to his ceiling on bright mornings, when the air currents were helpful, and up there he made careful notes on such creatures of the upper air as approached him. During one of these flights he became greatly impressed by a dive-bomber which nearly ended his career owing to an error of judgment about the effective area of the slip-stream. While descending he ruminated on this matter and came to the conclusion that improvements in power-diving would be highly advantageous to the sparrow breed. One might even reach the stage where choice seed could be snatched while the sower was actually at work, before the dibbling or raking process could be completed. With this in mind he began to look round amongst his acquaintances, and was highly delighted with the performance of three



"Next take a tablespoonful of T.N.T. . . ."



"We mustn't miss the six o'clock news, Annie. I always consider it the most optimistic."

sisters who all possessed marked di-hedral in their wing structure.

The sisters were greatly flattered to receive the attention of such a prominent sparrow as my friend, and would all gladly have married his son, but being sensible girls they decided that as only one of them could be lucky they would have a race to decide who should be the one. This pleased my friend enormously, and it was with every expression of joy that he arranged the betrothal of his son to the winner.

Later, the wedding feast was attended by most of the influential birds in Middlesex, and my friend gave his guests free access to the onion-seed bin in the allotment hut to mark the occasion.

It is too early yet to report fully on the outcome of this great experiment, but there have been some astonishing phenomena recorded by the local allotmenters. Seed losses have been heavy, and in fact my friend has had serious doubts as to the wisdom of speeding up improvements in his

own breed. He is finding that his once-rich acres are now hardly sufficient for his own needs, and his family has no sympathy with his own relative slowness. I understand that he has already begun a painstaking study of fuel economy, and that some day he hopes to produce a race of super sparrows of very high performance who will yet not find it necessary to strip their ancestor's preserves. I sincerely hope that he succeeds, because I have an allotment myself.

"Not in the South"

EARLY in the war Whitehall (Foreign Relations Department thereof) made a grab for my friend Eustace. And got him. He bought a black hat, and later a black coat with astrakhan collar. Now it is no secret that he is apt to pop off on missions and things. And when you ask him what's happening, and where, he switches the subject suavely to the weather, and implies that he is not to be quoted even on that.

We who knew Eustace were not in the least surprised that Whitehall roped him in. He seemed to have an inexhaustible knowledge of the people and countries of the earth. He had a way—I remember well—of silencing the amateur armchair diplomat, kindly but with precision. Eustace left you with the feeling that you had been guessing, but that he had been there.

The other evening he dined with me. He became pensive over some goodish port. Then he said:

"It is not always amusing to be in the know. Just now particularly it is making my conversation abrupt and vague. Doubtless annoying for anybody listening; certainly unsatisfactory for me. It leaves me with such a lot on my chest. But the fact remains that actually I was a fraud before the war. Before I got this new job, I mean. I didn't know things. I hadn't travelled much, and when I did travel I seldom kept my eyes open except for restaurants. I never read much, either. At least, not political stuff.

"But I found a formula, six or seven years go, for appearing to be a European, and world, pundit. It was a formula that let me off the boredom of finding out facts and retaining knowledge. I never told anybody. I was slightly surprised, frankly, that

nobody, not even you, found me out. In those days I was vastly disinterested in the affairs of the world. You remember how it became the fashion to have travelled further east across Europe than France, and how a temporary Scandinavian or Middle-European *fiancée* put up one's stock in conversation. People knew languages, and learnt others. And heavens, the spate of books people wrote and read with the words 'Europe' and 'Germany' in their titles! None of which made me more anxious to join the throng.

"I was more interested—I confess I still am—with the poetry that nobody will publish and the novel I never actually write. But my formula, judiciously used, kept me from being the sort of social pariah who seems not to know what the Slovenian Minority is.

"You know Kjeld, don't you? You met him when he was over from Denmark some summers ago. Well, his family lives near the German border. Or did. One day they were talking at the Fergussons' party about the Danes and their tremendous keenness on the sea and sailing. Someone said that one had to remember that when one came to assess the real European status of Denmark. Or something of the sort. In a not very inspired way I answered that sailing was not such a fetish in the South of Denmark, and there they were keener on agriculture and peasantry. This flat remark of mine was greeted with a good deal of open respect. I was surprised, especially as to this day I don't know if my statement is true.

"Then the next evening, during dinner at the Smythes', there was a discussion on Russia. That was back in the years when one was giving the Five Years' Plan a few more decades to get under way. Freda Smythe had just been to Moscow, and she was very much to the forefront of the talk. She

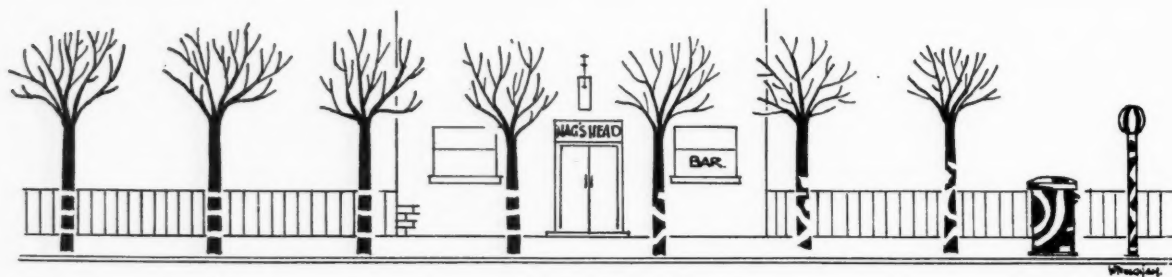
said, if I remember, that the Russian people were fine peasant stock, gradually receiving the mass education of a new and exciting world experiment. To which I answered, 'Would you say that of the South of Russia, Freda?' That gravelled her, and she only shoved her oar in with circumspection after that. And it was clearly felt that I was the Russian expert at the table. I, who dislike ballet, too. I changed the subject.

"There's my formula. 'Not in the South.' Do you remember my using it once on you? You insisted on starting a discussion about Federation or something in India. I forget what you said. Either that India was pro-Federation, or anti-. I know I got away with the suggestion that what you said was not strictly true of the South. And I recall . . . I recall lots of times and places.

"It makes me blush sometimes to think that possibly the reason I was offered this present job at the outbreak of war was that I fired a very neat 'Not in the South' torpedo into an Under-Secretary's sister-in-law's conversation in the last days of peace. The Under-Secretary was there, and he dislikes his sister-in-law with a surprising animosity for a diplomat.

"Ah, well. It is now my *job* to know the answers. I have to find out all the facts, after six years and more of bluffing. And the facts are mostly dull. And as in my conversation outside the office I am not allowed even to seem accurate, my lovely formula is useless to me. And after the war, when I get back to not writing my novel, I shall not be able to *help* knowing about Europe—North, South, East and West. It's hard.

"You can have my formula for yourself now, if you like. I won't give you away. In return I shall expect occasional dinners of this kind and more of this port."



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